



PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

United States Embassy, Athens, Greece

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SURCHARGE FEE ADDED TO PASSPORT FEE

Effective March 8, 2005, a security enhancement surcharge of \$12 will be added to the passport fee, as a result of the Department's latest Cost of Services Study and new authorities in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005. The Final Rule with the revised Schedule was published in the Federal Register on February 2, 2005.

Why is the fee changing at this time?

-- The main objective of the proposed adjustment is to ensure that the State Department recovers the costs of consular services through user fees to the maximum extent appropriate and permitted by law. The surcharges that will be added to the passport fee will help the Department pay for enhanced security features in the document.

When was the last time the fee changed?

-- The last change made to the passport fee was in August 2002.

Why is a \$12 surcharge being added to the existing cost of a U.S. passport?

-- The surcharge was authorized by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005, to support enhanced border security. The Department is in the midst of a multi-year effort to increase border security by strengthening the security of the passport adjudication process and the physical passport itself and to cover the cost of sending passports by Priority Mail, a security feature that allows us to better track and account for passports.

Thank you,
American Embassy
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